

12 —ING Openers

1. USING -ING OPENERS CORRECTLY

In order to use correctly the *-ing* opener to improve your sentence variety, make sure you follow two rules:

- Put a comma after the introductory group of words that contains the *-ing* word.
- Tell who or what performs the action of the *-ing* word within the first few words after the comma.

Incorrect: Peering through a hole in the fence, John F. Kennedy delivered his speech.

Correct: Peering through a hole in the fence, she heard John F. Kennedy deliver his speech.

The first sentence is incorrect because the writer is saying John Kennedy peered through a hole in the fence while delivering a speech. Possible, but highly unlikely!

2. CORRECTING -ING ERRORS

These sentences contain errors. Do you know what they are? (1) Running down the street, the Golden Gate Bridge came into view. (2) While taking the test, a bird flew into the room. To correct these and other errors made with *-ing* openers:

- Ask yourself *who* or *what* is doing the action indicated by the *-ing* word: *Who* is running down the street? *Who* is taking the test? The words that answer that question must appear within the next few words after the comma: Running down the street, *I saw* the Golden Gate Bridge come into view.
- Rewrite the sentence so that the subject of the *-ing* word is included in the introductory word group: While *I* was taking the test, a bird flew into the room.

EXERCISES

A. For each sentence, write the subject of the action on line (a) and the corrected sentence on line (b). If the sentence is correct, mark it C.

Example: 1. Having arrived late, the soup was served immediately.

(a) Who or what arrived late? the soup

(b) Correct sentence: Having arrived late, we ate our soup at once.

2. While opening the door, the packages fell to the floor.

(a) Who or what opened the door? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

3. Rushing in at the sound of music, Mr. Garcia scolded the workers.

(a) Who or what rushed in? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

4. While swimming in the lake, the sun set behind the mountains.

(a) Who or what was swimming in the lake? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

5. Walking down the street, the windows shattered from the force of the explosion.

(a) Who or what was walking down the street? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

6. Standing on the highway and thumbing a ride, the cars whizzed by.

(a) Who or what was standing on the highway? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

7. While gazing out the window, two cars collided at the corner.

(a) Who or what was gazing out the window? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

8. Shouting in a loud voice, the bus quickly passed me as it pulled away from the curb.

(a) Who or what was shouting? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

9. Crying bitterly, Jane fled into her house.

(a) Who or what was crying? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

10. While asking for directions, the dog bit the child.

(a) Who or what was asking directions? _____

(b) Correct sentence: _____

B. Write complete sentences using the following *-ing* openers. Be sure that the person or thing doing the action appears within the first few words after the comma.

1. Paying close attention to the song,

2. Trying to keep from laughing,

3. Strolling leisurely down the hall,

4. Falling off the log,

5. Quietly lifting the covers,